

Clerk File No. 310155

The City of Seattle – Legislative Department

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Department of Executive Administration
Director's Rule No. R-6.310.320S relating to
Digital Security Camera Systems.

Related Legislation File: _____

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Full Council Action:


Date	Decision	Vote



City of Seattle
Department of Executive Administration

Fred Podesta, Director, Department of Executive Administration

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Applicant: City of Seattle Department of Executive Administration	Page: 1 of 4	Revises: R-6.310.320S		
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Director's Rule: R-6.310.320S Digital Security Camera Systems	Code and Section Reference: SMC 6.310.320			
	Type of Rule: Code Interpretation			
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Approved:  _____ Fred Podesta, Director			 8/26/2009 _____ Date	

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Rule R-6.310.320S

Digital Security Camera Systems

Seattle Municipal Code subsection 6.310.320S reads as follows:

S. The taxicab and for-hire vehicle must be equipped with an operable digital security camera system approved by the Director pursuant to specifications provided by rule and adopted by the Director (summary suspension and Class B). All for-hire vehicles must be in compliance with this provision by March 1, 2009. Access to images made by any digital security camera is restricted to law enforcement personnel solely for the investigation and prosecution of crimes (Class C). Nothing in this subsection S shall be construed to remove a law enforcement agency's obligation to comply with the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution and article I, section 7 of the Washington Constitution in obtaining access to digital security camera images, including the requirement to obtain a search warrant if needed;

The following rule provides guidance for implementing this provision as authorized by the Seattle Municipal Code.

SMC 6.310.320 S provides that each taxicab must be equipped with an operable digital security camera system approved by the Director pursuant to specifications provided by rule and adopted by the Director. Access to a recording made by any digital security camera is restricted to law enforcement personnel solely for the investigation and prosecution of crimes.

Each digital security camera system installed in a Seattle vehicle must meet or exceed the minimum standards established by this rule.

1. Images. The camera must record sharp, undistorted original still images that are reliable for identification and prosecution of suspects seated in any position inside the vehicle and under all lighting conditions including darkness with a strong rear light source. Images must not be recorded by video and cannot have sound. Printed information shall be displayed at the top of each image showing the time/date, vehicle name/number, Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), trigger source, and recording unit serial number. This printed information shall not obstruct viewing of any persons in the images. Memory type and size shall be industrial grade 512 MB. Image capacity shall be at least 12,000. The memory type and size and image capacity must meet these standards not later than June 30, 2010. Images must be recorded in sequence and the oldest images shall be automatically overwritten first. Images must be stored on a removable or non-removable flash memory card. The format for image files must be JPEG or convertible to JPEG. Image recording resolution shall be 640 X 480 pixels (minimum) with 256 Grey Scale. The maximum compression ratio shall be 8:1. Images must be retained on the memory card without the need for a power source.

2. Software. (1) Installer software will demonstrate that the camera system is operational, the triggers operate properly, the test image is of the quality required, information associated with the image is accurate, and that the camera lens is properly aimed. Installers must not be able to view or erase images on flash memory cards.

(2) Inspector software shall be provided for use by city inspectors assigned to the Consumer Affairs Unit. Two copies of inspector software, with upgrades as they become available, shall be provided at no cost to the City of Seattle. Inspector software, shall not allow adjustments to be made, but shall demonstrate that the camera system is operational, the triggers operate properly, the test image is of the quality required, information associated with the image is accurate, and that the camera lens is properly aimed. Inspectors must not be able to view or erase images on flash memory cards.

(3) Viewing software shall be distributed to the Seattle Police Department only. Two copies of viewing software, with upgrades as they become available, shall be provided at no cost to the Seattle Police Department. Viewing software shall provide sharp, undistorted original still images that are reliable for identification and prosecution of suspects seated in any position inside the vehicle and under all lighting conditions including darkness with a strong rear light source. Software tools shall also be provided to the Seattle Police Department for enhancing image quality. Software used for viewing images shall be proprietary software and must be password protected or require a hardware key. Images must not be accessible using wireless technology.

3. **Recording (Control) Unit.** The recording unit housing and installation brackets must use tamperproof fasteners. The recording unit, and all cables, must be installed under the dash board and concealed from view. A download port must be installed inside the glove box both for plug-in access to images by the police using viewing software and for system test by the installer or city inspector using installer or inspector software, respectively. Alternatively, the download cable with USB connection may be run to the interior of the trunk, protected from damage and weather, and clearly identified. Camera system status indicator light(s) shall be installed so the driver knows whether the camera is functioning properly and when images are being taken.

4. **Camera Head.** The camera head must be installed adjacent to the rear view mirror, near the head liner, without obstructing driver visibility through the front windshield. The camera housing shall have no sharp edges or corners. The camera lens must provide a wide-angle view so that the full faces of all seated occupants are in view and in focus. Infrared LED lighting shall be provided for conditions of darkness and/or back lighting. The camera housing mounting brackets must be designed to prevent any adjustment of camera aim except by certified installers using special tools.

5. **Triggers.** There shall be three triggers for camera image sequences: (1) opening or closing of any door, (2) activation of the taximeter (taxicabs only), and (3) the driver emergency switch. The driver emergency switch shall override all other image sequences. The driver emergency switch and camera system status indicator light(s) shall be installed visible to the driver only. The camera image timing sequences for each trigger must conform to the following:

TRIGGER	TIMING SEQUENCE
Doors	1 image every 5 seconds for 60 seconds then 1 image every 60 seconds for the next 5 minutes.
Taximeter	1 image every 5 seconds for 60 seconds then 1 image every 60 seconds for the next 5 minutes then 1 image every 5 minutes while the vehicle ignition is on.
Emergency Switch	1 image every second for 60 seconds each time switch is activated.

6. **Installation.** The installer of the digital security camera system shall be trained by the manufacturer on proper installation procedures. The installer shall completely follow all manufacturer instructions for installing the security camera system. The installer shall produce a test image with the following information: (1) date/time, (2) taxicab or for-hire vehicle name/number, (3) trigger source; (4) recording unit serial number. In addition, the installer must complete a camera installation report, in the form specified by the Director, that describes the details of the installation and any maintenance or repair work performed.

7. **Testing.** (1) **Installer.** A test image and a camera installation report are required every time an installer performs installation, maintenance, replacement or repairs on a camera system or when a vehicle changes name, number or VIN. The test image and camera installation report must be submitted to the Consumer Affairs Unit by the installer immediately following the installation, maintenance, replacement or repair work and kept on file with the Consumer Affairs Unit for as long as the digital security camera system is installed in the vehicle.

(2) Consumer Affairs Unit. The Consumer Affairs Unit shall test the digital security camera systems at least annually, using inspector software.

(3) Drivers. For-hire drivers must verify that the security camera system is operating properly by checking the status indicator light and confirming the proper operation of the dome light and recording this on the safety checklist before the start of each shift. A for-hire driver is prohibited from operating a vehicle unless the security camera system is determined to be operating properly. In the event that the security camera system is determined not to be functioning properly, the vehicle will be removed from service until the digital security camera system is repaired.

8. **Signage.** A sign must be affixed to the outside of both rear doors, plainly visible to passengers upon entering the vehicle, stating that images of passengers will be made by the security camera system. These signs shall contain the following wording:

VEHICLE EQUIPPED WITH SECURITY CAMERA. ALL OCCUPANTS WILL BE PHOTOGRAPHED. Equivalent wording or symbols may be approved by the Director.

Lettering shall not be less than three quarters (3/4) inch in height and the width shall be proportional to the height. The lettering shall be in a color which contrasts to the portion of the vehicle exterior where it is placed. No other wording shall be displayed without approval of the Director.

In addition, a privacy notice must be displayed in the rear seating area of the vehicle that contains the following wording: DIGITAL CAMERA IMAGES OF ALL PASSENGERS ARE BEING RECORDED IN ORDER TO IMPROVE DRIVER SAFETY. ACCESS TO THESE IMAGES WILL BE LIMITED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF CRIMES. IMAGES ARE PERIODICALLY RECORDED OVER AND ARE NOT RETAINED EXCEPT WHEN USED FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF CRIMES. Lettering for the privacy notice shall not be less than one quarter (1/4) inch in height and the width shall be proportional to the height. The lettering shall be in a color which contrasts to the portion of the vehicle interior where it is placed. No other wording shall be displayed without approval of the Director.

9. **Protection of Evidence.** When a crime is committed, the Seattle Police Department, or other authorized law enforcement agency, will download the images from the recording unit either by: (1) removing the memory card and replacing a new memory card in the recording unit; (2) removing the recording unit; or (3) downloading the image using the viewing software. Law enforcement authorities must obtain permission from the driver or owner of the vehicle involved to download the images or must obtain legal authority to access the data. Law enforcement authorities will expedite the evidence gathering process as much as reasonably possible to ensure that the driver and vehicle may continue to engage in business as soon as practicable; provided, however, that the amount of time involved in gathering evidence will be decided on a case-by-case basis by law enforcement authorities, depending on the nature of the crime.

Effective Date: August 26, 2009